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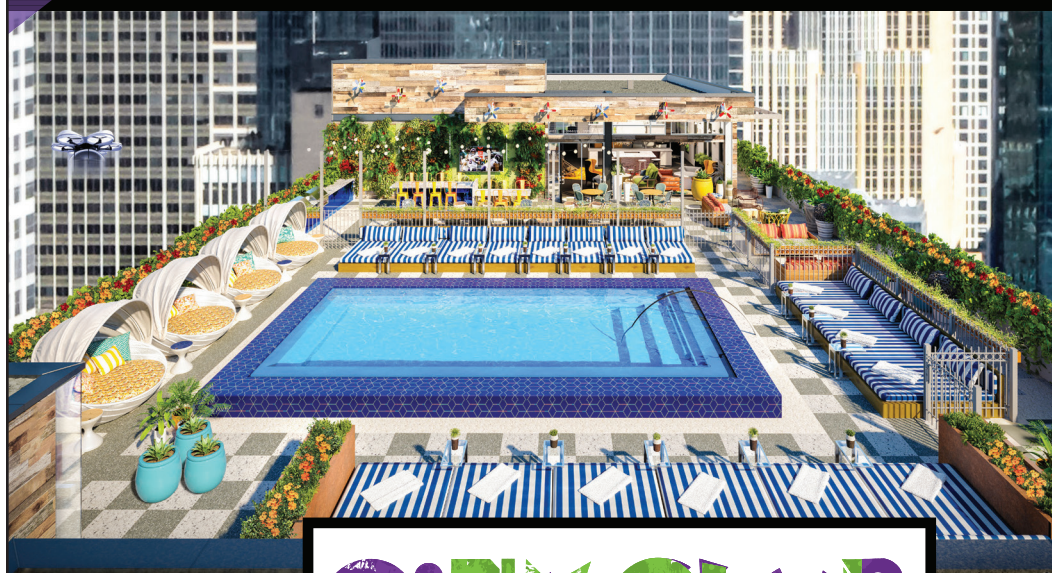
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WELCOME TO MINNESOTA!

By **EMILY CASSEL**

The Land of 10,000 Lakes, the Star of the North, the—oh, who are we kidding? You’ve made your way to the Upper Midwest because this is the home of the 2019 Final Four.

But if we may make a case for our homeland beyond “Prince loved it,” we’d tell you that you’ve found yourself in a real gem of a state. We’re so happy you’ve wound up here—specifically in the Twin Cities—where, yes, the winters can be brutal, but the outdoor life’s unrivaled, the art community is thriving, and there are more than a few restaurants you won’t want to miss. Is there a wealth of stuff to do beyond the parquet floors of U.S. Bank Stadium? You betcha!

You may be in town for the hoops, but with the Final Four on Saturday and the championship Monday you’ll have a lot of time to run off the clock between jump shots and jukes. That’s why we’ve rounded up a few of the best things to eat, drink, see, and do in Minneapolis and St. Paul (and slightly beyond) in this handy little guide. We have the lowdown on the tastiest stuff to eat near U.S. Bank Stadium and the ultimate guide to gambling like a local.



GETTY IMAGES

An aerial view of downtown Minneapolis and U.S. Bank Stadium

(Let’s be honest: Your bracket’s long been busted anyway.) We’ll tell you where to find live music, standup comedy, year-round Ferris wheels, and even stuff to tucker the kids out if they’re in tow. Just looking for a good bar that’ll have the day’s NBA games on TV? Of course we can help there, too.

This is a great place—we’re sure you’re gonna like it. And hey, good luck to whoever it is you’re rooting for. They’re definitely going to take home the W.

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YOUR TWIN CITIES CHECKLIST

BY PATRICK STRAIT

Look, we get it. When it comes to making a bucket list of travel destinations, Minneapolis probably isn't on the top of your list.

But it should be.

Last year, millions of people found out why the Twin Cities is the coolest place you've never visited when the Super Bowl took over U.S. Bank Stadium. With the NCAA Men's Final Four posting up at the same venue, even more people will have the chance to see what our city is all about. Even better? It won't be subzero temperatures outside. Probably.

Before they cut down the nets and Luther Vandross belts out "One Shining Moment," we put together our own "Big 10" list of all the stuff you should do between games.

MALL OF AMERICA

Don't let anyone downplay it as "just a mall": The Mall of America is amazing. In addition to every store you can think of, ranging from the standard retailers to places that only sell cheese, there are a billion restaurants, a Crayola World creative play land, and a mega arcade for grown-ups. Oh, and did we mention the world-famous Nickelodeon Universe (with rides for all ages), the 5D Shark Attack simulator, the massive aquarium (with actual sharks), and like eight Caribou Coffee locations? Right now you can even check out the traveling Candytopia exhibit, which is like a literal Willy Wonka Factory complete with marshmallow pit and every kind of candy imaginable. There's also a 3-on-3 basketball tournament happening during Final Four weekend in case you somehow need more hoops. Regardless of where you're staying, nearly every hotel offers a shuttle service, or you can hop the light rail and be whisked away to Minnesota's unofficial capital. Is it a mall? Absolutely. Is it "just" a mall? ...Did you not read about the sharks?

PAISLEY PARK

As you may have heard, Prince is from Minnesota. The Purple One tragically passed before his time, but his spirit lives on in the music as well as his private estate, Paisley Park, in nearby Chanhassen. You'll know it when you see it, as the exterior looks like a giant fortress of sugar cubes. From a full-scale concert space where his famous parties would rage until the early morning to the production studios where he recorded some of his most iconic hits, you'll have the chance to walk in his footsteps. While some of the spaces have been preserved exactly as they were when Prince was still alive, other parts of the property have been turned into museum-like exhibits dedicated to the different eras of his music. Self-guided and VIP tours are available, and there's even a Paisley Park Kitchen on-site that serves pancakes, so you can do your best Chappelle-as-Prince impression, which we're sure is hilarious for the staff every single time.

BETTY DANGER'S COUNTRY CLUB

As part of the Final Four festivities, there will be a massive Ferris wheel set up on Nicollet Mall, offering breathtaking views of the city free of charge. But the lines will likely be insane, and you might be on a limited timetable. We've got a Minneapolis life hack for you: Just a few short miles away in northeast Minneapolis is Betty Danger's Country Club, a delightfully tacky tongue-in-cheek country club-themed hangout with great drinks, a huge outdoor patio space, and some of the most true-to-tongue Min-

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nesota dishes you'll find on any menu. The best part, though, is the outdoor Ferris wheel that operates all year long. You'll be able to take in sweeping views of the city without fighting through a sea of sweaty people. Plus, you can bring drinks on it! If that isn't enough, there's an 8-and-a-half hole mini golf course, and more Instagramable photo ops per square foot than anywhere else in the city.

ACME COMEDY COMPANY

Looking for a little comic relief? It just so happens that Minneapolis has a wealth of standup available every night of the week. From the Comedy Corner Underground in the basement of the Corner Bar to the Royal Comedy Theater in nearby Hopkins to the House of Comedy inside the Mall of America, there's no shortage of places to see the very best local and national comedy talent. But if you want to visit the holy grail of Twin Cities comedy, you need to stop by Acme. The room is legendary, as comedy giants like Mitch Hedberg, Nick Swardson, Maria Bamford, and Amy Schumer have all performed on the Acme stage. It's helped launch the careers of countless national superstars, and is still a regular stop when major acts like Aziz Ansari, Craig Robinson, and Jimmy Kimmel come through town. No matter what night you go, you're guaranteed to laugh through some great sets, and you'll also get to see part of Minnesota's comedy history up close and personal.

MINNEHAHA FALLS

Minnesota may be the Land of 10,000 Lakes, but we have some pretty sweet parks, too. The best of the bunch is Minnehaha Falls, which attracts roughly one million visitors each year. Its most striking aspect is its namesake: a 53-foot waterfall cascading over limestone bluffs into the river below. You can see it from several different angles, with plenty of walking paths to lead you up and around the falls. Pavilion spaces, bike paths, and a pergola garden—one of the most popular wedding/prom/senior photo locations in the state—give you every opportunity to get back to nature. Best of all, the on-site restaurant, Sea Salt Eatery, opens on March 31, offering fresh seafood, an excellent beer and wine selection, and ice cream from local favorite Sebastian Joe's. You can easily make an entire day out of it, and take a time out from the insanity of the downtown scene.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

What's a weekend of NCAA action without a visit to the biggest college in Minnesota? While it's probably a safe bet that the Gophers won't sniff the Final Four, you can still take in the history of Minnesota athletics. Stop by TCF Bank Stadium and wander through the T. Denny Sanford Athletics Hall of Fame (located between Goldy's Locker Room and the ticket office), which honors the teams, student-athletes, and coaches who have made Minnesota's Athletic program one of the nation's best. The more than 5,000-square-foot Hall of Fame features exhibits for all 25 Gopher sports through pictures, memorabilia, and interactive displays. If that's not enough, take part in Goldy's Run on Sunday morning and run on to the field of TCF Bank Stadium. Sports aren't your thing? Well, we're not sure why you came here for Final Four weekend, but you can swing through the Weisman Art Museum, or just wander campus and stare at kids who have recently reemerged from four months of dorm room hibernation.

MATT'S BAR/5-8 CLUB/BUE DOOR PUB

For the foodie tourist, there is nothing more Minnesotan than the Juicy Lucy. Two patties of meat with a pool of molten-hot cheese at their core has somehow become synonymous with Minnesota's culinary scene. But the age-old question is: Who does it



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best? Matt's is often referred to as the original, and it still has the same dive-y feel and bare-bones menu it has for decades. Plus, Obama ate there when he was in town, so it has the presidential vote. The nearby 5-8 Club also lays claim to the title of the "original Juicy Lucy," but with a more expansive menu of Lucys decked out in different cheeses and sides. Or head to the Blue Door Pub, which has two Minneapolis locations and one in St. Paul, to see how their Lucy stacks up (and take advantage of a far more expansive drink selection). Whichever you choose, just try not to bite in too quickly or you won't be able to feel your tongue for the rest of the weekend. Or maybe the year.

FIRST AVENUE

In the heart of downtown Minneapolis is the iconic First Avenue, the concert venue where Prince filmed the now-iconic film *Purple Rain*. The solid black building is covered in silver stars with the names of some of the musicians who have graced the stage over the years, along with a lone gold star dedicated to the man who made the place legendary. The club still packs in sold-out crowds nearly every night of the week, hosting everything from concerts to dance parties and even the occasional fashion show or pro wrestling event. In addition to the Main Room, there's the smaller, more intimate 7th St. Entry attached, where some of the best up-and-coming bands from around the world have cut their teeth. If you don't pose for a photo with your favorite band's silver star, did you really visit Minneapolis at all?

MINNESOTA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM & SCIENCE MUSEUM

Your kids can only take so much basketball—why not expand their minds and give them a place to burn some energy? Over in St. Paul, we have two amazing museums packed with interactive ex-

hibits, multi-level play areas, and even a massive Omnitheater to blow back everyone's senses. The Children's Museum is one of the country's best, with separate areas to help kids of all ages and abilities have fun and build brains. Step into Imaginapolis and build your own cosmic world with tubes, hoses and panels, ditch your shoes to climb and slide down the massive four-story Scramble play area, or put your imagination to work in the massive family play city, Our World. After that, head over to the Science Museum of Minnesota and see the wonders they have on display. Test your reflexes or race against a pro athlete at Sportsology, play your way through the evolution of video games with Game Changers, and take an adventure through national parks in the Omnitheater. Each museum is fun and unique, and has plenty of stuff for everyone from toddlers to adults.

SCULPTURE GARDEN/SPOONBRIDGE & CHERRY

If you Googled our town before your visit, chances are you saw a massive Spoonbridge and Cherry staring back at you. This is the centerpiece of the Walker Art Center's outdoor sculpture garden. Celebrating 30 years this summer, the exhibit was recently renovated and re-spooned to be more sustainable, more spacious, and more full of art, with several new works including mirrors, bells, and a giant blue rooster. The Garden is free and open to the public every day from 6 a.m. until midnight, you can see a variety of thought-provoking artwork unleashed in the urban wild. The art center itself features an eclectic array of exhibitions, regularly hosts performances and film screenings, and has an incredible rooftop patio giving you a spectacular view of the sculpture garden and Minneapolis' downtown.



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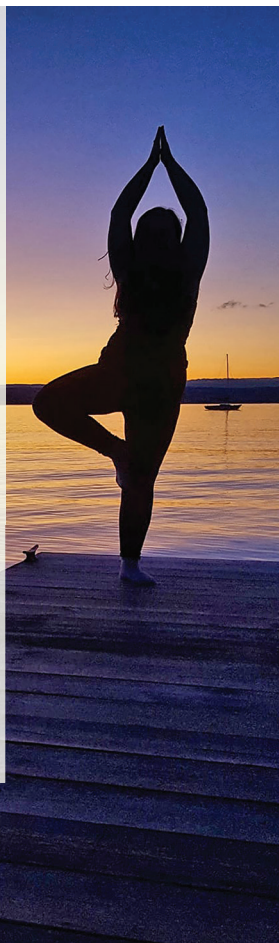


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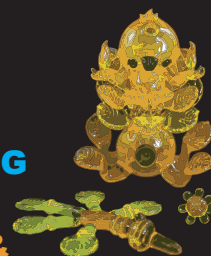
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YOUR BRACKET'S ALREADY BUSTED, MIGHT AS WELL GAMBLE LIKE A MINNESOTAN

Pull tabs are paying for U.S. Bank Stadium anyway!

BY SARAH BRUMBLE

There once was a time—t'was ugly, 'round about when folks believed in a thing called “Manifest Destiny”—whereupon the farther into the “Wild West” one went, the higher the stakes became. Those who parked in the Upper Midwest declined to play those games of chance. They cashed out, calling it good enough in this land of #blessed plenty, fed by crystalline waters reminiscent of their Scandinavia of yore.

Meanwhile, the *true* gamblers kept going, hedging their bets that colonizing a new frontier was better than what they held in-hand. Some called it quits at shady card tables amid John Ford's brutal backdrop of thirsty deserts. Others went farther, clinging to craggy peaks lacquered more in snow than gold. This later wave of settlers, with an air of invincibility fueled by the recklessness of the atomic age, rode a wave of crime disguised in flashing neon and sequins to the in-between lands.

To this day, such big, braggadocious gambits remain largely outside Minnesotan culture. Clocking in at 30th out of 50 in terms of statewide gambling addiction, we remain oxen in our passions. Even with a bill on the table to legalize sports betting, Minneapolis will never be a second Vegas, and the Iron Range will never rival the Sierra Madres. Doubtless, no one here is upset about this. Instead, we have our own (some might say milder) way of eliciting that particular feeling which only lighting money on fire can produce.

Ours begins with charity. Yes, that's right; every single lawful form of gambling regulated by the state makes its way back to kids' sports, veterans, and the like, hinging upon the betterment of others. Literally all the ways to become a hundreadaire or a thousandaire in the neon-lit bar glow, guzzling pints of Grain Belt Premium, is cloaked in a do-gooder ordinance dating back to 1945. Because even when we're “bad,” we're still kinda decent at heart.

From the outside, this seems insane. But maybe it's just different. And since your March Madness bracket bets have probably already busted, why not join in our charitable fray, basking in that moment where currency sublimates into something else entirely—into a *human experience*? Some might call that feeling “hope.”

Here are the best local joints to experience firsthand the way Minnesota converts cash into chaos—for the greater good.

MEAT RAFFLES

For anyone new to the region, the mention of a meat raffle seems like the punchline of a witty ninth-grader's joke. But stumble into any number of dive bars on a weekend, particularly Friday, 5 p.m.-ish, and find pool tables lined in egregious quantities of shrink-wrapped, donated flesh, waiting to be scored. Hole-in-the-wall Dusty's Bar in Northeast has a classic throw-down each week, as does Half Time Rec, St. Paul's perennially underrated gem with bocce in its lumpy basement.

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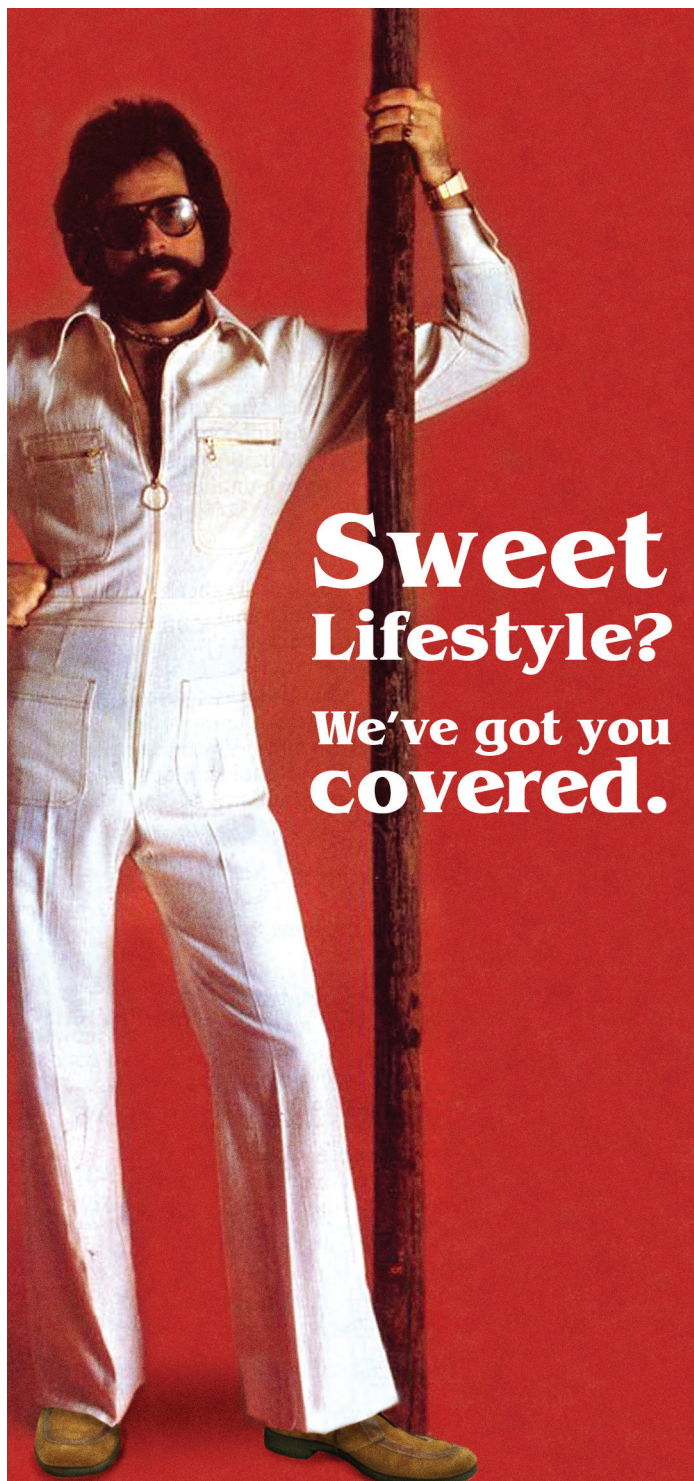


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winning number is called from a microphone, which is promptly given back to the evening's musician, and the newly minted Captain Heart Attack saunters over to claim their prize—a bowling ball's worth of hot dogs? A T-bone spread fit for a family of six? Enough hamburgers to feed ten?

PULL TABS

Rippies. Cardboard Crack. Paper slots. Everyone has a pet-name for the lynchpin of Minnesota's gambling empire. Sometimes found in vending machines, but most charmingly sold by attendants barricaded into a corner behind transparent PVC boxes teeming with potential, these little squares provide a satisfying sensation of pop-pop-pop when tearing away their three strips to reveal (ideally) matching cartoons and a red stripe denoting cash prizes that can be upwards of \$500 in a single play. At places where people pull like they mean it, paper husks of sorrow litter the floor in stacks, like a Texas peanut bar.

We're not exaggerating: \$1, \$2, or \$5 at a time, Minnesotans played \$1.5 billion-worth of them *last year alone*. And that's *not* counting the take from pull tabs' electronic version tasked with footing the bill for the extraordinarily spendy U.S. Bank Stadium, whose popularity rose so much in the past year that they'll pay off construction bonds ahead of schedule if they stay the course. Looking to get your fix? Go outside. Walk three steps. You can't swing a cat without hitting a pull tabs vendor. While the floors at Northeast's 1029 can reach ankle-high, we're partial to warmer locales with manned booths. Try Bull's Horn in Minneapolis' Ericsson neighborhood, due to its legitimately perfect burger and delightfully crispy-crunchy KFC wings, and Lowertown's Dark Horse, which is among the only places in the Cities where one can be a fiscal idiot while also eating steak and sipping on a dram of fine, peaty scotch—like the Caol Ila Cask—or any of their 120+ whiskey options.

THE WHEEL

Described by a server at Northeast's 1029 Bar as being "easy, like Russian Roulette!" the Wheel is actually quite milquetoast and has a near-zero chance of killing you. On the other hand, it looks pretty complicated and requires a bit of explanation, and the vertical spinner has a bunch of nail-like things sticking out, which seems a little tetanus-y? The basics include a fixed buy-in—\$5 in the case of the 1029's game, though there are other variations of the "paddlewheel" at establishments like Gabes on the Park, etc. One then claims a set of color-coded numbers corresponding to those on the Wheel from a slotted table. Dive-bar Vanna White gives dizzy a spin, and depending on where the needle stops/how bets were placed, someone gets a (proportionate, albeit fixed) payout, up to triple your principle.

BINGO

Anywhere else in this fair land, Bingo is the domain of blue-haired biddies and their fourth husbands. Here, this is no exception, though they leave room at their table for the rest of us to join them. At spots like Northeast's quintessential dive-with-a-fish tank, the Knightcap (Tuesdays!) and South Side's favorite not-sports sports bar the Cardinal (Saturdays!), a diverse neighborhood crew of regulars have found that showing up week after week, lucky daubers in hand, not only justifies turning a bar habit into a hobby, but also exponentially increases the number of grandparents in one's life.

THE DAILY SHAKE

Research has suggested this game may **actually** (gasp! Here in Minnesota!!) not be entirely lawful, and will in *no way benefit*



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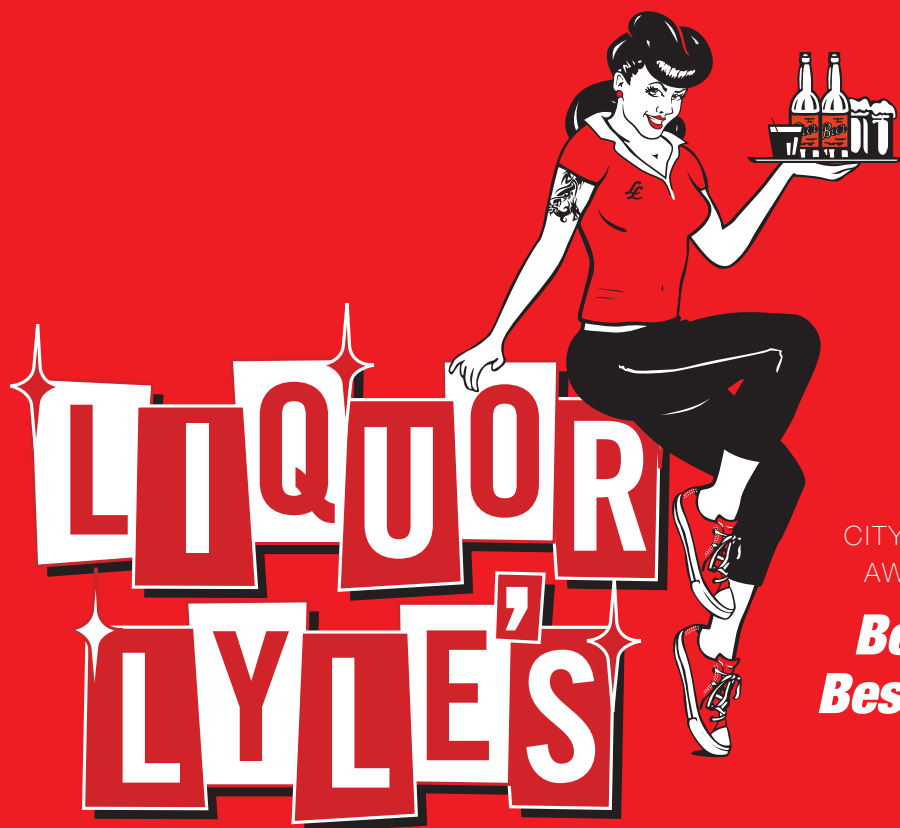
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The Children. Therefore, at the risk of outing one of our favorite establishments, we conclude this guide with a quest to find the Daily Shake without us telling you exactly where we play.

(Hint: It's not-not on the West Bank.)

Upon locating the Daily Shake, the rules are simple: One dollar, one roll per person, per day. The gambler needs only roll five of a kind. Any kind. Do so, and a shoebox of cash is forked over, which has accumulated since the last lucky son-of-a came through and rolled Yahtzee.

As with all things in life, the Fates assure no one deserves any of the above, and prizes will vary. Surge of adrenaline, however, is foretold.

OUR FAVORITE PLACES TO WATCH SPORTS THAT AREN'T SPORTS BARS

BY SARAH BRUMBLE

There exists a certain population of people for whom sports fandom is something that remains hidden among "polite" company, not unlike a hickey. When it comes time to catch The Big Game and/or Fight, we suddenly remember we lack cable in our homes, or learn we don't shell out for the correct "sports package," or have grown weary of Reddit's unreliable pirate streams.

Sometimes, too, the people in our domiciles simply do not

share our fervor for Gritty.

So, to where do we flee?

Admittedly, we can be a bit like Goldilocks, shunning both legendary local gameday spots like the Herkimer's partisan-ship-and-tailgating atmosphere, and the stark, halogen terror of nationwide behemoths like B-Dubs. We seek instead those few establishments that manage to exist in a sweet spot between hexing all sports fans and welcoming every single one of our jerseyed brethren. Sure, the TVs may be a little more lo-def where we're headed, but we can actually sit down, and regulars won't give it a second thought when we cheer as grown adults pulverize each other like modern demigods.

Basically, we're getting old; we just want to watch sports with our buds, in peace and comfort, emerging relatively intact and well-fed at the end of the contest. Here are those precious few places outside the house where it's a joy to drink and eat bar food.

RUNYON'S

Despite its North Loop location, Runyon's is the opposite of a cookie-cutter condo in every way possible. High-backed wooden barstools drag atop an ancient, cracked subway-tile floor, while walls lined in giant mirrors old with smoke reflect televisions and a cozy forest-green world, somehow making the place feel like both a respite from the traffic outside, and bigger than it has any business being. Covered in framed photos of Janis Joplin, backlit jazz stars, NASCAR whips, and cheeky sayings like "If you're going after Moby Dick, better bring tartar sauce," Runyon's takes all comers. And with hot wings that are consistently ranked the best in the city, we can think of few settings that pair better with nail-biting one's way through a championship.

107 Washington Ave. N., Minneapolis; 612-332-7158

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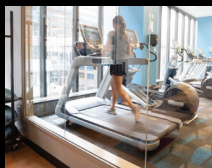


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THE CARDINAL BAR

At the Cardinal Bar, south Minneapolis' favorite beer-and-wine-only joint, neon signs advertise everything from Miller, Pabst, and Hamm's to far less-macro offerings like Bent Paddle and Insight. Pitcher and pint specials run even on weekend nights, because hey, it takes a lot to get rowdy without booze. Plus, the environment is a little too airy to be a proper dive, thanks to an openable, window-packed garage door that ensures you note the passage of time during day games—and beyond. Past the tiny front room with the bar itself, two more expansive seating areas wait for patrons, only one of which has TVs, and is packed with a veritable cafeteria of low tables fit for four adults. The more analog of the rooms features IRL bar sports like billiards tables and darts, for when one gets fed up with the game or just needs a proper distraction.

2920 E. 38th St., Minneapolis; 612-724-5837; cardinaltavern.com

MANCINI'S CHAR HOUSE

Never, ever call Mancini's a sports bar. It is, unquestionably, a repository of Twin Cities history nonpareil, which simply has what people have always wanted (or at least, what they've wanted since 1948). That said, there's nowhere better to take in a rousing afternoon match of physical prowess, and a steak sandwich, and a perfect Manhattan.... Stadium seating abounds, as do armchairs and coffee tables not strewn with your living room's unsorted mail. Should a traditional bar environment seem more apropos, settle into a tall-backed bar stool along the kidney-shaped island itself, where gentler options like Summit, Peroni, and Alaskan Amber await. There's no bad seat in the house. Show you care about what's happening—the food, the drinks, the outcome—and those won't be hours you'll forget anytime soon. Even should your team lose, a live band is likely to step on Mancini's small corner stage and help chase off the blues.

531 W. Seventh St. St. Paul; 651-224-7345; mancinis.com

NORTHEAST YACHT CLUB

The most charming aspect of the NE Yacht Club is not that the Yacht Club isn't on water, has no boats, never airs sailing races, and isn't a theme bar. The best part of the Yacht Club is the regulars, who stop just short of welcoming anyone who steps foot through the door into their fold. King of them all is Dickie, the bar's stalwart bartender—perennially soft-spoken, kind, and always at the ready with his toaster-oven pizzas and tree of bagged chips. On big days, everyone bands together to put on a communal crockpot feast. It doesn't sound like much, but that's the key: It's just enough, and never too much—like a hug with no touching.

801 Marshall St. NE, Minneapolis; 612-378-1740

MAC'S INDUSTRIAL [SPORTS] BAR

Listen, Linda. First off: We've been coming here for years, we just went without noticing the very small "sports" printed on their sign. Second, and most important: Mac's is the only sports bar that's actually good for you, just like the zingy, saucy Brussels sprouts they serve. The awkwardly located Northeast watering hole, crammed between a dentist and the Aveda Institute, has drink specials for grown-ups, like a beer and a bump combo featuring Dogfishhead and Clyde May's straight bourbon. Moreover, if someone acts a fool, bartenders swap the idiot's drink for a giant trophy labeled "Mark's Intestinal Sports Bra." They call it "our dunce cap," and it's adorned with President Trump's face and the words BABY DICK, with a My Little Pony taped to its top. The penalized are required to stare at it for five minutes, until they've "really thought about what they've done." In the game of sports bars, Mac's did not come to play—they came to win. And make everyone better sports (viewers) for it.

312 Central Ave. SE, Minneapolis; 612-379-3379; maccsindustrial.com



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NINE BARS TO CHECK OUT IN DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS

BY THERESA J. BECKHUSEN

Finding a bar you click with shouldn't be undervalued.

Knowing you have a spot where you order your usual, and you and the waitstaff are on nodding terms? This is Minnesota; that's a big deal! A good bar is that magical third place—neither work nor home—to gather and unwind. Here are nine cool bars in downtown Minneapolis that could just be that place for you.

CUZZY'S

Stepping into Cuzzi's is like entering the funnest fun house that just so happens to be a dive bar. Disco ball on the ceiling? Check. Defaced dollar bills plastered to basically every surface? Yup. A ghost named Betsy? Uh... don't worry about her. Knock back a few beers, catch the game on one of their TVs, and chow down on some tater tots. Order The Big Cuz—four patties with bacon and all the fixings—if you don't have anything else to do but nap after. If you go for breakfast—served every morning, Monday through Saturday—check out the omelet menu and get the pancake as big as your head.

507 Washington Ave. N., Minneapolis; 612-339-6211; cuzzys.com

BANK

Want a little art deco ambiance? Head to BANK, which is situated in—you guessed it—a former bank. No more tellers here: The soaring ceiling now overlooks a circular central bar, cozy banquettes, and comfortable couches made for lounging as you knock back martinis. Food is New American done right, with as many ingredients as possible sourced locally. Their happy hour is generous, running 3 to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday with select \$4 beers, \$6 glasses of wine, and \$6 single-pour cocktails.

88 S. Sixth St., Minneapolis; 612-333-4006; bankrestaurantmpls.com

TOWN HALL BREWERY

Town Hall Brewery has been serving quality suds for 20 years. Their bar is a terrific spot for trying a couple of pints and for meeting up and unwinding with friends. With around 27 beers on tap and 13 other guest beers and ciders, you'll have some decisions to make. Delicious decisions. Try the Choco Citrus Bruin, a Belgian flavored with dark chocolate and kumquats, or, for something lighter, go for the Double 8 IPA or the Dortmund Local Export Lager. Food is a variety of classic pub dishes—so, yeah, go ahead and order that chicken tender flight to go with your sweet corn nachos.

1430 Washington Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-339-8696; townhallbrewery.com

CONSTANTINE

If you like bars that feel like the well-organized cellar of a rich, mysterious globetrotter, have we got a place for you. Chilling out right below Monello, Constantine is decked out in prints of oil portraits, taxidermied animal heads, wainscoting, jewel-like lighting fixtures, and tufted leather banquettes. It's fun, it's plush, there are terrific cocktails. Order from the house classics or the staff creations (you know what to do with the "For the 'Gram"). For oenophiles and beer-lovers, Constantine also has wines by the glass and a curated menu of beers. Head there for happy hour, 5 to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, for some terrific deals.

1115 Second Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-353-6207; constantinempls.com

NOMAD WORLD PUB

Go to the Nomad for bocce and stay for the music. Or stay for the \$20 daily prix fixe: a Heggies Pizza, two PBRs, two shots of



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501 Cedar Ave., Minneapolis, 612-338-6424; nomadpub.com

BAR ZIA

Not far from U.S. Bank Stadium, Bar Zia has you covered for bar food, beer and cocktails, and a comfortable place to settle in and watch the game. Order the taco salad—yes, it is served in a crispy, edible bowl!—or the Angry Viking Jam burger, which has two patties, bacon, pepperjack cheese, and jalapeño jam. And, because this is a classic Minnesota bar, Heggies is available.

420 Fourth St. S., Minneapolis, 612-345-7347; barzia.net

MODIST BREWING COMPANY

This is a brewery that turns its taproom into a roller-skating rink on Valentine's Day. If you need more reason to go (though I don't know why you would), keep reading. Modist brewers don't confine themselves to established styles—sorry, lawnmower beer lovers. Instead, they imagine a flavor or experience and work from there to create brews that are unique and fun and flavorful. Their Japanese lager is made with over 40 percent rice and Japanese hops for a refreshing twist on the expected. Too bad the roller skating only comes once a year.

503 N. Third St., Minneapolis, 612-454-0258; modistbrewing.com

EASTSIDE

Jamie Malone, a multiple-time James Beard award semifinalist, took over Eastside late last year and reinvigorated the menu and vibe. Yes, you can order a drink that serves two to six and arrives in a golden swan. Yes, they serve cocktail wieners. Yes, there is hand-sliced, three year-aged Mangalitsa ham on the menu. It's a restaurant for fun and indulgence and sharing. A lot of the menu is, in fact, for family-style ordering (roasted duck, anyone?). The cocktails also have a star turn here: One uses duck fat-infused bourbon, while another mixes gin and Thai tea. They also have Hamm's, if that's what you're in the mood for.

305 Washington Ave. S., Minneapolis, 612-208-1638; eastsidempls.com

MARVEL BAR

Unmarked and tucked away behind the Bachelor Farmer, Marvel Bar serves up incredible craft cocktails in a modern speak-easy atmosphere. Low lighting and music just loud enough to create a buzz will make you feel instantly glamorous. Do plan to eat before you arrive, as Marvel Bar doesn't serve food—though they do offer bags of Cheetos.

50 N. Second Ave., Minneapolis, 612-206-3929; marvelbar.com

13 THINGS TO EAT WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF U.S. BANK STADIUM

BY THERESA J. BECKHUSEN

You're heading toward U.S. Bank Stadium for the big game/concert/monster truck rally... and your stomach rumbles.

Sure, you could wait to eat until the purple-and-gold kick off (or Grave Digger starts smashing up a storm), but with so many good options just a short walk away, why wait? Here are 13 contenders that'll handily fill your belly and fuel your cheering.

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ZEN BOX IZAKAYA

Distance from U.S. Bank Stadium: 0.3 miles

What to order: Tonkatsu Ramen

WHY: A deep bowl of porky broth and rich flavors? Yes, please. Maybe it's chilly, and you need to warm your bones before lining up at security. (Maybe it's not, and you just want a heaping bowl of noodles!) Either way, it's not a bad idea to throw some tsukemono (assorted pickles) and gyoza in with your order. And those snacks are available at a discount during both happy hours: 5 to 6 and 9 to close Monday through Thursday, 5 to 6 and 10 to close Friday and Saturday.

WHERE: 602 S. Washington Ave., Minneapolis, 612-332-3936; zenbox.com

DAY BLOCK BREWING COMPANY

Distance from U.S. Bank Stadium: 0.2 miles

What to order: Bacon flight

WHY: Do you really need a reason? This is a daily lineup of specialty and in-house cured bacon and sauces. Should go well with one of their beers. Or their Bloody Mary. Day Block sources as much as they can locally, meaning whatever you order is likely both fresh and produced nearby. Supporting the local economy calls for a celebration... and for that, we suggest a bacon flight.

WHERE: 1105 S. Washington Ave., Minneapolis; 612-617-7793, dayblockbrewing.com

THE RED SEA

Distance from U.S. Bank Stadium: 0.7 miles

What to order: Meat Combo Platter or Super Veggie Platter

WHY: This is simply some of the best Ethiopian food in the city. Portions are linebacker-sized, so come hungry and prepare to share with your pals. Eating with your whole gameday group is better anyway; platters are served family-style, so everyone can grab a piece of injera and dive into these heaping helpings of flavorful, spicy goodness.

WHERE: 320 Cedar Ave., Minneapolis; 612-333-1644, theredseampls.com

REPUBLIC

Distance from U.S. Bank Stadium: 0.5 miles

What to order: Cheese curds

WHY: Fried, cheesy goodness, that's why. Plus, we're in the Midwest! Wisconsin is like, right there, there to the east... just squint a little. They're making the curds *as we speak*. Nothing says classic bar food like battered cheese dipped in sauce—especially this “yum yum” sauce—and they couldn't pair better with one (or several) of Republic's many fine beers. Chow down already.

WHERE: 221 Cedar Ave., Minneapolis, 612-338-6146; republicmn.com

RUNYON'S

Distance from U.S. Bank Stadium: 0.9 miles

What to order: Buffalo wings

WHY: No, we're not just saying that because we named these best wings in the Twin Cities last year. Or because Runyon's drummies and flats are a Twin Cities classic, consistently included on other “best wings” lists. It's because they're delicious. If the artifacts a civilization leaves behind amount to the little things that fueled lives—broken pottery and such—online photos of these bright-orange, mouth-watering morsels of crispy heaven will tell a lot about our priorities. Served with blue cheese and celery sticks on the side, they're as quintessential a wing as you'll find. You might want to get two orders.



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WHERE: 107 N. Washington Ave., Minneapolis, 612-332-7158;
runyons.com

MONELLO

Distance from U.S. Bank Stadium: 0.9 miles

What to order: Torchio

WHY: Monello offers modern takes on Italian food in a stylish space exuding calm, something you may find yourself in need of after a particularly devastating loss. (Better luck next season!) Cocktails are mixed to perfection, the wine list has an impressively deep bench, and pastas come in half or full sizes, so you can share—or not. The Torchio tends toward the gamier side of Italian cuisine, serving up braised rabbit with crème fraîche and artichokes. It's a delight, and it's a rarity on restaurant menus, which is almost reason enough to order it.

WHERE: 1115 Second Ave. S., Minneapolis, 612-353-6207;
monellompls.com

HARD TIMES

Distance from U.S. Bank Stadium: 0.8 miles

What to order: Breakfast. Just...any breakfast.

WHY: Post-gamed until bar close, did ya? Well, Hard Times serves breakfast all day, which here means 6 a.m. to 4 a.m. daily. The ordering system is a bit of a dance (and be warned: it's cash only), but you'll happily clear these minor hurdles for some vegetarian and/or vegan goodness. The Cedar-Riverside café has been collectively owned since 1992, lending Hard Times its enduring punk/hippie/vegetarian/vegan ideology. Expect comfort food in generous portions at incredibly reasonable prices. Your wallet will thank you, since you were just shelling out \$9 for domestic drafts—and what's homier than a big ol' breakfast burrito at 2 a.m.?

WHERE: 1821 Riverside Ave., Minneapolis

IZZY'S ICE CREAM

Distance from U.S. Bank Stadium: 0.3 miles

What to order: Malted Waffle Single

WHY: Need to balance U.S. Bank's brats and burgers and beers with something sweet? Izzy's ice cream is handmade, and your flavor options are almost limitless. The smell of the waffle cones alone demands you order one, even if you're a dedicated ice cream cup person. Visit their website to see what flavors they're scooping—they update the list every three minutes—and keep your fingers crossed they Summit Oatmeal Stout or Swedish Garden Party are available.

WHERE: 1100 Second St. S., Minneapolis, 612-206-3356;
izzysicecream.com

ERIK THE RED

Distance from U.S. Bank Stadium: 141 feet

What to order: Brisket Reuben

WHY: The age-old question, pondered by philosophers for eons: Can anything improve upon the already transcendent Reuben? Erik the Red has the answer with its brisket Reuben. Styled as Nordic barbecue, the brisket is rubbed in a spice blend inspired by flavors from that region, and the sandwich comes with a choice of side. (Not that you needed us to tell you, but: mac and cheese.) Erik the Red gets extra points for being practically inside U.S. Bank Stadium, so if you're looking for food and beer *fast*, you know where to go.

WHERE: 601 Chicago Ave., Minneapolis, 612-249-5999;
eriktheredbar.com



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SPOONRIVER

Distance from U.S. Bank Stadium: 0.3 miles

What to order: Charcuterie

WHY: Brenda Langton and Timothy Kane were 2019 semifinalists for the James Beard Foundation's Outstanding Restaurateur award, so it feels criminal not to include their restaurant, Spoonriver, on this list. Committed from the beginning to fresh, sustainable, locally sourced foods, Spoonriver serves up a wealth of deliciousness every day on their robust menu. For a tour of Minnesota-produced meats, order the charcuterie board. Lip-smackingly good sausage, pate, smoked meats, and cheeses accompanied by mustard, house pickles, and crackers. It's a meal in itself—which is why you'll find it listed among the entrees.

WHERE: 750 S. Second St., Minneapolis, 612-436-2236; spoonriver.com

MURRAY'S

Distance from U.S. Bank Stadium: 0.7 miles

What to order: Butter knife steak

WHY: Murray's is the steakhouse to the stars! Since 1946, this Twin Cities icon has provided downtown Minneapolis with a classic spot for premium steaks and elegant cocktails. In 1951, author and radio personality Maurice Dreicer awarded Murray's his Silver Butter Knife Award as part of his decades-long quest for the perfect steak. Murray's now offers a steak emblazoned with the name of that award, and it's absolutely worth the walk down Sixth Street from US Bank to enjoy.

WHERE: 26 S. Sixth St., Minneapolis, 612-339-0909; murraysrestaurant.com

THE LOCAL

Distance from U.S. Bank Stadium: 0.9 miles

What to order: Vincent burger

WHY: It's an iconic Minneapolis burger. A longtime stalwart of fine French dining in the Twin Cities, Vincent, A Restaurant closed at the end of 2015 after 14 years. It was known for its elegant cuisine, but the Vincent burger often stole the show and was what folks were quick to mourn when the restaurant shut down. However, the famous burger now lives on at The Local. The fact that this baby is a) stuffed with braised short ribs and smoked gouda and b) topped with gherkin sauce and c) can live comfortably in both a white-tablecloth French restaurant and a cozy pub speaks to its versatility. And its deliciousness.

WHERE: 931 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, 612-904-1000; the-local.com

KEYS AT THE FOSHAY

Distance from U.S. Bank Stadium: 0.7 miles

What to order: Dessert!

WHY: Keys is that classic Twin Cities chain that best mimics diners back East. Think giant menus, hearty dishes ranging from salads and sandwiches to full-on platters of dinners and nine options for potato-based sides. And the choices for desserts are ample. You can gaze upon the sugary beauties in the case at the host stand. Salivate over the many slices of pie, cheesecake, and carrot cake. Once you've ordered, relax at the bar or a table. The cheery yellow walls invite you to stay awhile.

WHERE: 114 S. Ninth St., Minneapolis, 612-339-6399; keysfoshay.com

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SATURDAY, APRIL 13



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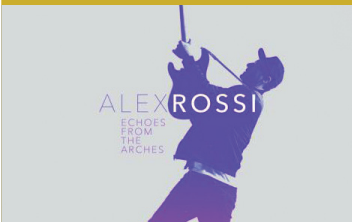
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